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MONTANA
DISASTER AND EMERGENCY SERVICES
DIVISION NEWSLETTER
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The articles in this newsletter do not
constitute official policy.

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ADMINISTRATOR'S MESSAGE

The times they are a changin'...Not even the most ardent futurist could have predicted the unprecedented challenges to emergency management which occurred in the waning months of 1989: natural hazards -- Hurricane Hugo, the Loma Prieta Earthquake; technological hazards -- the Exxon Valdez spill; national security issues-- the fall of the Berlin Wall and the growth of democracy in Central Europe. Undoubtedly flexibility and innovation will be the hallmark of our programs in the decade to come.

Among the first indicators of these exciting times are the emphasis issues selected by FEMA Headquarters for the Federal Fiscal Year '91 Comprehensive Cooperative Agreement (CCA). During our recent Federal/State Management Conference at Region VIII, the state directors were given a glimpse of things to come. Primary emphasis will be on preparations to respond to a catastrophic disaster. This focus will occur within the context of the dural use concept of Survivable Crisis Management (SCM).

In the December issue of the newsletter, I proposed four initiatives to enhance our ability to respond to catastrophic events. With your support, significant progress has been made toward these goals:

E a r t h q u a k e E d u c a t i o n --
Kindergarten through Grade 6. With the official recognition of Montana as a high-risk state (see related article, "Montana Participates in Earthquake Program"), this initiative has made a significant step toward reality. This superb cooperative effort has already been followed by proposed legislation requiring earthquake drills in Montana schools.

Automation of the State Emergency Operations Center (EOC). In March the Emergency Information System (EIS) was certified as being the automated format for emergency planning and response within the state. A preliminary stand-alone EIS module has been ordered for the State EOC, and a budget proposal has been submitted by the Department of Military Affairs to expand the system to a local area network with five additional workstations.

Development of Heavy Urban Rescue Teams (HURT). As the result of a national conference on urban rescue held in Seattle in February, preliminary efforts are underway to develop a Rocky Mountain Task Force as a regional contribution toward the national goal of 25 teams. Under the leadership of Colorado and Wyoming, an interim plan is being developed and other state participation is being encouraged. Although we have not received specific guidance under the CCA, I can note that under P.L. 101-130, \$800,000 has been earmarked for funding state and local team development. If you are interested in forming a "Big Sky" team, give Jim Brown a call.

Creation of an Alternate State EOC. Last month the Division submitted an SCM proposal to FEMA Region VIII. This comprehensive study by Mary Arnold detailed the requirements for continuity of government legislation, alternate fixed sites, and a mobile State EOC. This is the first hurdle to be surmounted if we are to receive federal funding for these projects.

Economy dictates brevity, but future newsletter articles will update you in greater detail concerning developments within each of these projects. Thanks for supporting "your team in Helena."

-F. Guy Youngblood

ELECTED OFFICIALS WORKSHOP

The Montana Disaster and Emergency Services will have a unique opportunity this December to inform newly-elected county officials about the agency's role under Montana law. I will conduct a half-hour training session during the "Elected Officials Workshop" to be presented by the Montana Association of Counties (MACo) at a location yet to be named.

My presentation covers the authority, duties and responsibilities of DES, its existence at both the state and local level, disaster response, hazardous materials incidents, and how we communicate. It is hoped that the county commissioner just beginning his or her term will leave with a better understanding of the role of the local DES coordinator.

The workshop was developed in the '60s to provide training for newly-elected county commissioners and was more recently expanded to include other county officials just assuming their duties. Each year, the Council of County Officials agrees on an agenda for the workshop, which is then developed by the Local Government Center at Montana State University in Bozeman. The date and location for the "Elected Officials Workshop" will be announced later by MACo.

On a related matter, everyone needs outside technical assistance at times. County Commissioners are no exception. If you have questions concerning the issue of hiring, DES is prepared to act as hiring consultants/advisors to county commissioners. However, we will do so only if we are requested. If we can be of help, please give us a call.

-F. Guy Youngblood

MONTANA ENTERS EARTHQUAKE PROGRAM

On March 26th Governor Stan Stephens received formal confirmation that the proposal submitted last November to FEMA to participate in the Earthquake Program has been approved. In his letter to the Governor, Grant Peterson, Associate Director for State and Local Programs and Support noted that allocation of funds to Montana is pending Congressional approval of FEMA's FY-91 National Earthquake Program Budget.

Additionally, as a result of P.L. 101-130 FEMA was allocated a supplemental appropriation of \$3 million in "no year" funds to "improve earthquake preparedness throughout the United States." FEMA is currently evaluating options on how to best fulfill this mandate and it is possible that Montana may be eligible to obtain a portion of these funds as well.

The Montana DES staff wishes to express their appreciation to county DES coordinators Paul Spengler, Lewis and Clark; Wilma Puich, Butte-Silver Bow; Hank Wruck, Gallatin; and Robert Rasmussen of the Lewis and Clark County Planning Office and Mike Stickney, Montana Bureau of Mines and Geology, Earthquake Studies Office for their assistance in preparing this proposal last November.

With the continued support of our Congressional delegation and the Governor's Office an earthquake program for the State of Montana could become a reality this fall.

-Robert Musselman

The following article submitted by:
Paul Spengler, Coordinator
Lewis and Clark County

The Tri-County Wildland Interface Working Group, composed of 13 agencies from Lewis and Clark, Jefferson and Broadwater Counties, is preparing for the coming fire season with a public awareness campaign. The media blitz is scheduled for April, when public service announcements will be given to radio and TV stations, with a possible story in the Helena Independent Record. The message will be for home-owners in forests to take simple precautions to protect their houses from wildland fires.

This information is in a pamphlet produced by the group, entitled "Could Your Montana Home Survive a Wildfire?" The pamphlet summarizes the recent fires in the state that either threatened or destroyed homes and provides 26 tips to reduce the fire threat to a house in wildlands.

The highlight of the publicity campaign will be Smokey the Bear visits at Helena's two McDonald's restaurants on three consecutive Saturdays in April. Part of the public information to be distributed then are placements which quiz the property owner on the safety rules he has adopted to reduce the fire danger to his home in the woods. The placements will be printed free of charge by the owner of the McDonald's restaurants, and also distributed to other fast food restaurants in Helena.

The group has also been presenting a 20 minute slide show to interested groups, which demonstrates the dangers of not mitigating the fire threat in wildland areas.

The pamphlet is available from the Department of State Lands. Call Mike Ness at 444-3633, to place your order for this free material.

EARTHQUAKE TAPES

We have received two new videotapes on schools and earthquakes. The first, entitled "Critical Time: Planning a Response to the Effects of Earthquakes in Public and Private Schools," runs 14 minutes. It advocates development of school earthquake plans by school administrators with the support of emergency preparedness professionals. Educating school children and their parents about earthquake hazards and response is strongly recommended.

"Earthquakes and Schools: Building Schools to Withstand Earthquakes" is 16 minutes long. It covers the advantages and necessity of seismic-resistant design in schools, and makes an excellent case for the sound investment of seismic design.

Both these tapes contain information valuable to school administrators, teachers, parents, and planners. If you are interested in either of these tapes, please send a blank VHS tape and we'll make a copy for you.

-Gretchen Bingman

THE PUBLIC ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

The Federal Emergency Management Agency's Public Assistance Program provides federal grant money for repair, replacement, or restoration of publicly owned and certain private nonprofit facilities damaged by disaster. Grants are generally provided on a 75% federal/25% nonfederal cost-sharing basis.

Eligible applicants include the state and any county, city, town, or other political subdivision, Indian tribes, and private nonprofit organizations which provide essential services of a governmental nature.

Eligible work costs fall into two categories: emergency work or permanent work. Emergency work is that which must be performed immediately in order to save lives, protect public health and safety, or protect property. Permanent work includes, but is not limited to, the repair or restoration of disaster-related damage to the following facilities:

1. Public roads, streets, and features such as bridges, shoulders, and drainage structures.
2. Water control facilities, including dams, levees, and irrigation channels.
3. Buildings such as public office buildings, police and fire stations, and libraries, together with office equipment, furnishings, consumable supplies, and vehicles.
4. Utility distribution systems such as sewage treatment plants and storm and sanitary sewer lines.
5. Public parks and recreational facilities.

Damaged facilities are restored to their predisaster condition and design, subject to applicable codes, standards, and specifications. Insurance proceeds and salvage payments are deducted from the approved grant.

As soon as possible after a presidential disaster declaration is issued, briefings are conducted for local government officials to explain the requirements and procedures for requesting and obtaining public assistance grants. At these meetings, each potential applicant completes a "Notice of Interest" form which identifies the entity and the types of damage sustained.

Information gathered in the Notice of Interest helps determine the makeup of damage survey teams which then gather detailed damage information. Grant amounts are determined from the "Damage Survey Reports."

More detailed information on the Public Assistance Program is contained in Montana's PA Administrative Plan, currently under revision. The revised plan and updates to related sections of the Local Government Disaster Information Manual are scheduled for completion later this year. If you have questions in the meantime, please feel free to contact Gretchen Bingman of the state office.

MONTANAN IS NEW NEMA TREASURER

The Big Sky Country will have a much higher profile in emergency management issues nationally. State DES Administrator F. Guy Youngblood has been appointed treasurer of the National Emergency Management Association. Whenever decisions are to be considered by NEMA or its board, Guy will be there with input. The treasurer's post will provide not only Montana, but the rest of the West as well, a greater voice in how scarce federal dollars and resources are allocated.

TRAINING NEEDS ASSESSMENT

The Annual Training Needs Assessment Conference will be conducted May 24 and 25, 1990. The Executive Board of the Montana Association of Disaster and Emergency Services Coordinators will meet in Helena to discuss the Federal Fiscal Year 1991 Comprehensive Cooperative Agreement (CCA) guidance.

The outcome will be the draft of the training proposal for Montana's FFY-1991 CCA. Consideration will be given to your input, federal guidance, and shared training with other states within FEMA, Region VIII.

-Chris Christensen

DES HOLDS CONVECTIVE WEATHER AND FLOODING CONFERENCE

The State DES Emergency Operations Center was the scene April 4 of the day-long Convective Weather and Flooding Conference. In attendance were representatives of the state agencies that would be expected to respond to local requests for assistance with weather related emergencies; also the National Weather Service, Montana Power Company and the Montana Red Cross.

The NWS's Dave Olsen and Jeff Graham briefed the group on what might be expected this spring and summer:

- o Above normal precipitation has occurred this winter along a belt from the northwestern to the southeastern part of the state. The highest probability of flooding exists in this area.*

- o Eventually, Montana will be struck by a major tornado.*

- o There will be an unannounced communications exercise sometime in May to test NWS, DES and the Montana Highway Patrol communications center.*

The Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation is closely monitoring its Tongue River reservoir and dam in light of the expected increased runoff and has developed a system to warn those downstream if problems should arise with the half-century old structure.

Quarterly conferences such as this one help to keep state government ready to deal with the hazards of the season.

SHOW OF INTEREST FROM COUNTIES IN EXERCISING WITH MALMSTROM

An inquiry was made several months ago by the Division office concerning county interest in participating in joint off-base exercises with Malmstrom Air Force Base during 1990 or 1991.

Interest was indicated by Roosevelt County for 1991 including possible participation by two contiguous counties of Richland and McCone; Lincoln County in 1990 or 1991 focusing heavily on communications, mass casualty and search and rescue problems; Phillips County in 1991; and again by Lewis and Clark County in either 1990 or 1991 as the select site or as an alternate site with seven days advance preparation notice.

The letters submitted by the counties have been shared with Malmstrom Air Force Base and plans are being reviewed under a process of coordination.

Yvonne Kobasziar, Chief of Disaster Preparedness for MAFB has asked us to thank local coordinators for their prompt response. Yvonne stated that counties will be notified of bid and coordination status in the most timely manner possible.

-Katharine S. Selby

CHLORINE SAFETY TRAINING

The Great Western Chemical Company is once again sponsoring several three-and-a-half hour training sessions on chlorine safety. Each session will include information on the properties of chlorine, practical handling techniques, health effects of chlorine exposure, emergency response to incidents involving chlorine, and safe handling and use of calcium hypochlorite for water treatment.

Locations and scheduling are as follows:

Colonial Inn, Helena - Monday,
May 7 - 1:30 p.m.

Village Red Lion Inn, Missoula
Tuesday, May 8 - 9:00 a.m.

This training is an excellent way to refresh skills and to educate new hires. Best of all, both sessions are free of charge. Seating is limited to 50 people per session.

Interested individuals should call Greg Peterson, District Manager of Great Western Chemical in Helena at 442-8900 to reserve slots for attendance.

-Katharine S. Selby

NOTE OF THANKS

Thanks to all coordinators and their guests who helped make the afternoon exercise at the Governor's Conference such a success.

The activity was so well received that it has since been suggested that it be an annual event at our Governor's Conference on Disaster Preparedness.

While that suggestion may not be practical on such a scale, it does indicate some very positive reinforcement from a portion of Montana's County Commissioners toward emergency management exercising in which they (the commissioners) can actually participate.

Another benefit derived from the "Titan City" and "Placer" exercises is a greater appreciation for the strong role and heavy responsibility a Disaster and Emergency Services coordinator is counted on to assume when communities experience a disaster.

Appreciation also goes to members of the state staff who worked hard in development of the exercises and to FEMA Region VIII representatives for their active involvement and support.

In retrospect, it was an outstanding example of what working as a team can accomplish.

Again, thanks to all of you for the professionalism and high-spirited support evidenced throughout that day in conjunction with the exercises.

-Katharine S. Selby

COMINGS AND GOINGS

We're all going to miss the cheery voice on the phone that has answered EMA account questions during the last three years. Linda Cottrill is moving to a new job. Quite literally moving. She will be working for Mergenthaler Transfer and Storage in Helena keeping their United Van Line and personnel accounts.

Linda, with her quick wit and easy going nature, always brought sunshine down in the DES basement. Best wishes in your new line of work!

Another long time staff member is also leaving. Kate Selby, the Exercise Training Officer has resigned as of April 13. Kate has had many successes with DES; the Ft. Peck Dam failure exercise and the development of a state agency exercise design team were notable accomplishments.

In her last week with Disaster and Emergency Services, Kate will be giving another Exercise Design Course to ensure the continued success of local exercises. Good luck in your Friday departure. We hope you find very green pastures in your future!

Al Klingler, former Toole County DES Coordinator has retired from civil defense work after 35 years of service in emergency management. Irene Gottfried and other District 2 coordinators honored Al at a luncheon March 4. Al and his quiet words of wisdom will be missed. Enjoy your retirement, Al, no one deserves it more than you.

NEW NEWS!

You have probably noticed the new form the DES Newsletter has taken in the last few issues. The newsletter is shorter and the paper lighter and you are getting copies twice as often.

Another thing that has changed is the content. That is where you, our readers, come in. We want to know what you are doing and we want to tell others. So, we are asking, requesting, and appealing for newsletter articles on emergency management issues.

Articles should be of interest to other emergency managers, typed (Please! Marlys has enough problems reading my handwriting) and submitted by the 15th of January, March, May, July, September or November.

Articles should be informational or educational, not just another meeting announcement. If you have questions about article content, call me.

The newsletter is published in February, April, June, August, October and December.

I look forward to reading words of wisdom from across the state.

-Mary Arnold

YOUR STORY HERE!!!